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A NOTE ON AN ABNORMAL *NYMPHAEA PUBESCENS* WILLD

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An abnormal specimen of *Nymphaea pubescens* Willd. collected from a tank at Garia, a suburb of Calcutta is described in some detail below:

Main flower stalk apparently normal, long, flexible with a terminal cluster of flower buds, tiny leaves and bract-like structures (Fig. 1). Bract-like structures 10, in three consecutive whorls and alternating; spathulate, largest about 10.1 cm. long and 3.4 cm. broad; axils of some bracts subtending tiny leaves and flowers. Leaves and flowers on individual stalks and in whorls, alternate. Number of leaves 5 showing involute vernation; leaf stalks 9.5 cm.-11 cm. long. Flowers 5, complete. Flower stalks 17.2-25.5 cm. long.

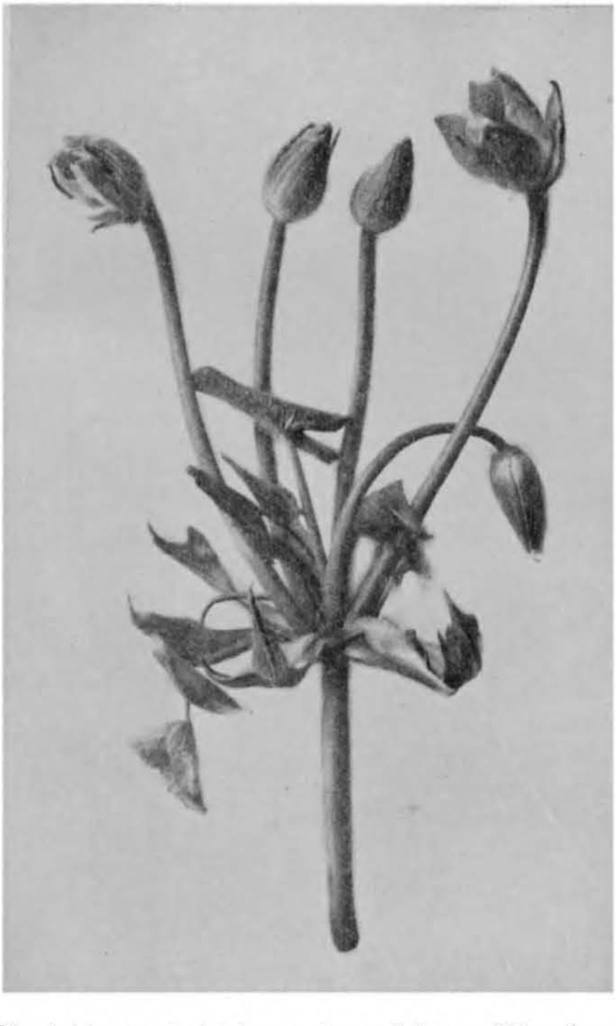

Fig. 1. Photograph showing an abnormal flower of *Nymphaea pubescens* Willd. Note the bract-like structures, leaves and secondary flower buds in the specimen surmounted on a common stalk, and giving the appearance of an unbellate structure; (approx. × ⅓).

The abnormality seen in the specimen would appear to be a case of spontaneous proliferation and would seem to be somewhat different from the earlier reports by Masters (1869); Worsdell (1915, 1916); Debbarman (1922-23); Biswas (1940); and Bose (1940). In the previous cases the abnormality was seen in a fully formed flower whereas in the present case, the flower is completely suppressed and the proliferations have originated spontaneously from the terminal portion of a stalk, which would seem to suggest a close analogy to the viable portion in the underground root-stalk of the Lily plant giving rise to several shoots subtended by bracts and ultimately forming the entire plant of *N. pubescens* Willd.

Incidentally the reference to the species *N. lotus* Linn. by Bose (1940), Biswas (1955), would appear to be erroneous as the Linnean species does not occur in India (Conard, 1905; Dunn, 1916).

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